



Testimony
Robin Wilson
Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce
Before the Environment Committee
March 7, 2011

Re: HB-6505, AN ACT CONCERNING STREAM FLOW REGULATIONS

The Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce opposes **HB-6505**, which will negatively affect the progress that has been made to develop more reasonable stream flow regulations that will address the following concerns:

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY NEEDS OF CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES - Hospitals, nursing homes, manufacturers, restaurants and other businesses of all sizes and types rely on a safe, adequate supply of potable water to operate their businesses and meet the needs of their customers. However, the proposed stream flow regulations would significantly reduce the amount of water available to meet these needs. HB-6505 exacerbates these problems by extending the regulations to groundwater withdrawals without providing sufficient protection for a public water suppliers' safe yield/margin of safety is not compromised.

CONNECTICUT ECONOMY - Connecticut faces significant challenges in creating a competitive business climate due to high taxes, unemployment and workers compensation costs as well as escalating energy and housing costs. Connecticut lost more than 100,000 jobs since the recession began in March 2008. We need to focus our leadership on the serious problems immediately facing this state in order to build a more competitive business climate. It is our understanding that less than 1% of the streams in Connecticut are documented as having flow impairment issues. Given the magnitude of the state's economic and budgetary problems, and the limited scope of stream flow impairments, we believe the state should pursue a more balanced approach to stream flow, as called for in SB-1020, which will require the regulations to be developed in concurrence with the state Department of Economic and Community Development and other agencies to ensure that they do not further undermine Connecticut's competitiveness.

STATE BUDGET CRISIS - Given a budget deficit of between \$3.2 and \$3.8 billion, the state needs to reduce the size and cost of government and focus on providing core services to Connecticut residents and businesses. One of the impediments to economic development has been the inability of DEP to process permits in a timely manner. We are very concerned that creating a massive new program to address what is admittedly a very narrow issue will divert much needed resources away from permit processing.

We therefore urge you to oppose **HB-6505** and support SB-1020, which provides the framework for a more workable, balanced approach to addressing stream flow and urge its adoption.

The Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce serves more than 800 member companies from the North Haven and Wallingford area. We are the largest non-metropolitan chamber in the state.

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